

## **Bacille Calmette-Guerin (BCG)**

### **What is BCG?**

BCG, or bacille Calmette-Guérin, is a vaccine for tuberculosis (TB) disease. Many foreign-born persons have been BCG-vaccinated. BCG is used in many countries with a high prevalence of TB to prevent childhood TB. However, BCG is not generally recommended for use in the United States because of the low risk of infection with TB. Prior BCG vaccination is not effective in preventing TB disease in adolescents or adults.

### **Testing for TB in BCG-Vaccinated Persons**

TB skin tests (TST) and TB blood tests that detect TB infection are not contraindicated for persons who have been vaccinated with BCG.

- TST- BCG vaccination may cause a false-positive reaction.
- TB Blood Tests- Blood tests to detect TB infection, unlike the TST, are not affected by prior BCG vaccination.

### **What indicates TB infection or disease in a BCG vaccinated person?**

A diagnosis of TB infection should be considered for any BCG-vaccinated person who has a TB skin test reaction of 10 mm or more. A diagnosis of active TB disease should be considered for a BCG-vaccinated person regardless of his/her TB skin test result, if he/she has symptoms of TB, especially if they have been exposed recently to infectious TB. Any person diagnosed with TB infection or disease by a TB doctor should take the therapy recommended.